

## **Congressman Childers Supports U.S. Troops, Military Families in Final Defense Authorization Bill**

### ***Defense authorization will promote economic development in Mississippi***

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October 8, 2009

Washington, DC – Congressman Travis Childers (D-MS) today voted for final legislation to protect our troops, improve readiness, and increase benefits for military families. The bipartisan National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 2647) strengthens our nation's defense programs and supports military families through increased benefits, including a pay raise for service members and the prevention of TRICARE payment increases. It also includes funding for defense projects that will promote economic development in Mississippi.

“Our troops and their families make countless sacrifices to defend this great nation, and it's essential that they receive the protection, resources, and benefits they need and deserve,” said Congressman Childers. “Today's legislation will ensure that our soldiers have the equipment and other resources necessary to keep them safe and enable them to do their job, provide increases in benefits for military families, and fund important defense projects that will spur economic growth and development in Mississippi.”

The National Defense Authorization Act includes the following provisions:

#### **Provides benefits for military families.**

- Extends the prohibitions on increased premiums and co-pays for TRICARE recipients and increased user fees for the TRICARE retail pharmacy program.

- Provides a 3.9 percent pay raise for service members to help them maintain a competitive salary compared to their civilian counterparts.
- Expands quality housing for all service members and their families.

**Protects our soldiers while promoting economic development in Mississippi.**

- Supports procuring, sustaining, transporting, and fielding Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles for our troops overseas. MRAPs are produced by Navistar, located in Mississippi's First Congressional District.
- Supports the DDG 1000 program without prejudice to a Navy initiative for a possible return to DDG 51 production. Provides funding for the DDG 51 program to be used either for advanced procurement or to procure major equipment spares. Parts of both the DDG 1000 and the DDG 51 are manufactured in Mississippi.
- Provides funding for 14 F-35 Strike Fighters (JSF), 7 each for the Air Force and Navy. Additional funding is authorized for continuing JSF development, including the JSF competitive engine program. Parts of this engine will be developed by GE in Batesville.
- Includes the Clean Contracting Act of 2008 to promote competition in federal contracting. Also increases taxpayer protection by ensuring reimbursement contracts are used appropriately, linking award fees with contractor performance, preventing abuse of interagency contracts, and ensuring that items bought using commercial procedures are actually commercial products. Establishes a database of information on contractors who violate the law or use bad business practices.

*A pro-gun, pro-life Mississippian, Congressman Travis Childers (D-MS) represents the First Congressional District in North Mississippi. He is a member of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition and serves on the House Agriculture and Financial Services Committee. Congressman Childers co-chairs the reestablished bipartisan Congressional Rural Caucus and was appointed to the bipartisan Second Amendment Task Force. For more information, visit [www.childers.house.gov](http://www.childers.house.gov)*

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